



LENA C. TAYLOR

Wisconsin State Senator • 4th District

HERE TO SERVE YOU!

Testimony of Senator Lena C. Taylor

Assembly Committee on Elections & Campaign Finance Reform

Assembly Bill 545 – Independent Candidate Principle Statements

Tuesday, November 17, 2009

Honorable Chairman Smith and members of the committee:

Thank you for taking testimony on Assembly Bill 454, relating to the standardization of the statements below the names of the Independent Candidates for partisan office.

Currently under state law, there is no standardization for the statements on ballots for Independent Candidates for partisan office. While partisan candidates are not allowed to make ballot principle statements, independent candidates are not prohibited in any regard. Without this standardization, some candidates receive the benefit of what is essentially an advocacy piece at the polls, creating an unfair election.

As an example, an independent candidate could currently legally place his or her name on the ballot with a statement of their principles as long as this testimony.

Under this bill and Assembly Amendment 1, a standard will be set for Independent Candidate's statements on all ballots throughout the state. This standard will be set at 35 characters or less. This will allow for an unbiased election. For you information, the section that I have underlined is 35 characters, without spaces.

I encourage your support of this bill, and hope we can move it forward in this legislative process.

Thank you.